



Opera Ireland

MEMBERS MAGAZINE - WINTER SEASON 2002



Tchaikovsky's Melodic Card Trick

The Queen of Spades - the most exciting of all Tchaikovsky's lyric stage works.

Politics & Passion in a Verismo Jewel

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Ronnie's Return

Veronica Dunne returns to take on the title role in *The Queen of Spades*.

Priority booking
form included

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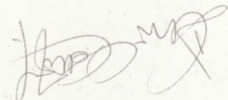


Dear Friends,
Welcome to 2002 Autumn magazine which contains news of our Summer activities, with details of our forthcoming season.
Since our production of *Carmen* in April, the company has been vigorously engaged in a strategic planning process which will take us to December 2003.

A key element in the company's performance in the immediate past has been the blending of well-known repertoire, presented in a dynamic and innovative way, with work which is new to Ireland. This policy has offered a greater balance to you our audience and enhanced the reputation of the company both at home and abroad. We will continue with this programming policy and of the fourteen productions contained in the plan it is expected that six will be either Irish premieres or works which are rarely performed in Dublin. The repertoire will range from early baroque to late 20th century opera.

Whilst the financial health of the organisation is now in a much better state, we still need to earn over €1 million per annum through box office, sponsorships and subscriptions. Consequently your support for the company has never been more necessary or indeed valued. In addition the revenue generated from individual subscriptions allows us to offer three thousand seats a year at half-price to students, thus allowing a new generation to enjoy the live opera experience. On their behalf we say Thank You for your continuing association with our company. I do hope you enjoy our Winter season.

David Collopy
Chief Executive



Above:
The conductor and cast of the Gala Benefit Concert
Scene from *Carmen*

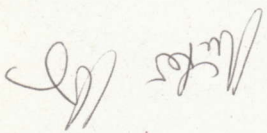
Dear Friends,
Since our successful Spring Season, with seven sold out performances of Calixto Bieito's innovative production of *Carmen* and our spectacular Gala Benefit Concert, Opera Ireland has been very productive.

After many months of preparation and rehearsals, the National Youth Orchestra, in collaboration with Opera Ireland, performed Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* in The University Concert Hall, Limerick and Symphony Hall, Birmingham. The success of the Ring Cycle was overwhelming (as you can read in the reviews on pages 16-17 of the magazine) and we will certainly continue this fruitful collaboration and aim for further artistic achievements of this calibre. Alexander Anisimov and myself chose the singers for the Ring Cycle, many of whom have sung with Opera Ireland in the past and will appear with Opera Ireland in the future.

For the last four years, Opera Ireland has organised Masterclasses, in association with University Concert Hall, Limerick, with internationally renowned teachers for young singers. This summer, Volker Vogel worked very intensely with twelve young singers. The result was shown in a spectacular lunchtime concert in the foyer of the Concert Hall in Limerick. In the near future we plan to establish an opera studio to give more young Irish singers a full professional training to prepare them for a career as international singers.

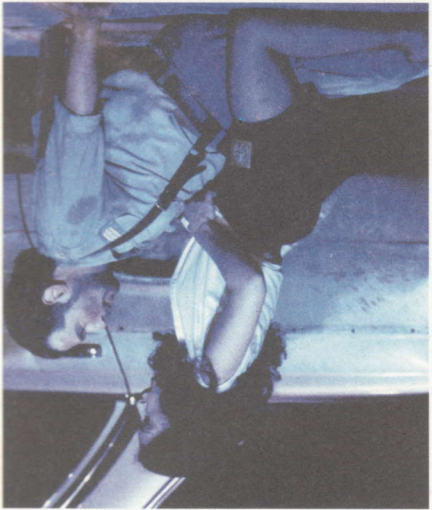
For our Winter Season we are presenting two operas that have not been seen in Dublin for many years: Umberto Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* and Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades*. After his stunning production of *Boris Godunov* for Opera Ireland three years ago, Ansgar Haag returns to Dublin to direct a period production of *Andrea*

Dieter Kaegi
Artistic Director



The artistic team (Alexander Anisimov, Joe Vanek, Paul Keogan and myself) that produced *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in Winter 2000, will collaborate again for *The Queen of Spades*. The legendary Veronica Dunne will sing the role of the old Countess.
I hope you will join us for two wonderful nights of lyrical pleasure. I promise you, you will be moved and exhilarated by these incredible operas.

by the acclaimed young Italian tenor, Maurizio Graziani.
Theater of *Andrea Chénier*. The title role is sung of Maddalena in our co-production with Ulmer Luciano Pavarotti a few years ago, will perform for the first time in Dublin. She will sing the role of Maddalena in our co-production with Ulmer *Chénier*. Nina Kautio, who sang Maddalena with



For our winter season, we are presenting two operas:
Umberto Giordano's, Andrea Chénier and
Tchaikovsky's The Queen of Spades.

Winter Season 2002

Performances

The Queen of Spades (Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky)
Andrea Chénier (Umberto Giordano)

RTÉ Concert Orchestra
 Opera Ireland Chorus
 (Chorus Master: Cathal Garvey)

Booking

Opera Ireland Box Office
 Tel: (01) 453 5519 / Fax: (01) 453 5521
 E-mail: info@operaireland.com
 Tickets from: €14 to €71
 (No Booking Fee)
 Open from: 09.45 - 17.00 (Mon - Fri)

Gaiety Theatre, Dublin
 Tel: (01) 677 1717
 (Booking Fee Applies)
 Open from: 10.00 - 19.00 (Mon - Sat)

Book on line:
www.operaireland.com

The Queen of Spades

Pyotr Ilich Tchaikovsky

Herman	Peter Svensson
Lisa	Victoria Kurbatskaya
The Countess	Veronica Dunne
Pauline	Tatiana Kaminskaya
Prince Yeletsky	Sam McElroy
Count Tomskey	Johannes von Duisburg
Tchekalinsky	Volker Vogel
Sourin	Alexander Teliga
Governess	Galia Ibragimova
Masha	Kathleen Tynan
Tchaplitsky	Sergey Vlasov
Narumoff	Alexei Diougaev
Chloë	Victoria Kurbatskaya
Daphnis	Tatiana Kaminskaya
Plutus	Johannes von Duisberg
Master of Ceremonies	Pavel Bragin
Conductor	Alexander Anissimov
Director	Dieter Kaegi
Designer	Joe Vanek
Lighting Designer	Paul Keogan
Choreographer	Liz Roche
Assistant Director	Anthony Norton

RTÉ Concert Orchestra
 Opera Ireland Chorus
 Piccolo Lasso Choir

Dates: November 17, 19, 21, & 23
 Venue: Gaiety Theatre, Dublin
 Performance Time: 7.30pm

Andrea Chénier

Umberto Giordano

Andrea Chénier	Maurizio Graziani
Maddalena di Coigny	Nina Rautio
Carlo Gérard	Marcel Vanaud
La Contessa di Coigny	Galia Ibragimova
Bersi	Sophie Pondiclis
Il Romanziero	tbc
Roucher	tbc
Labate	Volker Vogel
Un Incredible	Volker Vogel
Madelon	Deirdre Cooling Nolan
Matthieu	Alexander Teliga
Conductor	Marc Tardue
Director	Ansgar Haag
Designer	Carlo Tommasi
Lighting Designer	Paul Keogan
Choreographer	Liz Roche
Assistant Director	Eva Maskus

RTÉ Concert Orchestra
 Opera Ireland Chorus

Andrea Chénier is a co-production with
 Ulmer Theater, Germany.

Dates: November 16, 18, 20, 22 & 24
 Venue: Gaiety Theatre, Dublin
 Performance Time: 7.30pm

Politics & passions in a verismo jewel



had its first performance at La Scala Milan in March 1896, just eight weeks after Puccini's *La Bohème* had been launched in Turin. Luigi Illica, who was also one of Puccini's librettists, provided Giordano with an original scenario derived from his own careful study of historical and literary sources.

Part love story and part historical thriller, the libretto is a work imbued with political disillusion. Initially, the poet Chénier is saddened by the indifference of the aristocracy to the plight of the peasants. Later, he and the other

protagonists, including the lively servant turned revolutionary Carlo Gérard, are disappointed by the atrocities of the Revolution. Ultimately, they are all destroyed by its dictatorship. At the end, there is nothing left but love. It is through love that Chénier and his beloved Maddalena find freedom. But,

Umberto Giordano (1867-1948), like his near contemporaries Leoncavallo and Mascagni, is wrongly considered to be a one-work composer. In fact, he wrote twelve operas in all, and four of them have been seen in Ireland within living memory. DGOS mounted *Fedora* in 1959 and both *La cena della beffe* and *Siberia* have been done at Wexford. But it is *Andrea Chénier* that has always been high in the affections of Irish opera-goers, not least in Dublin where it has had no fewer than six productions – the first in 1957 and the last in Spring 1983.

Politics and passions loom large in *Andrea Chénier*. Set amidst the terrors of the French Revolution, and based on episodes in the life of the poet André Chénier, the opera is one of the jewels of the Italian verismo school. The opera Giordano described as an historical drama was the third of his works to be staged. It

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Above:
Scenes from *Andrea Chénier*, Ulmer Theater

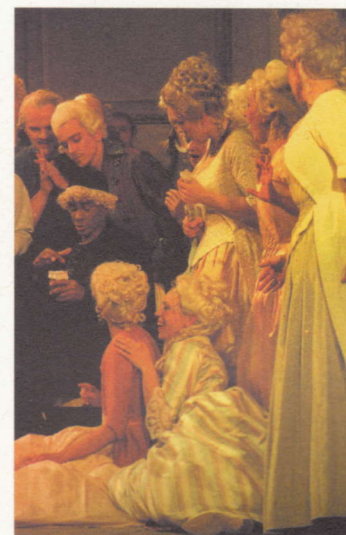
Part love story and part historical thriller, the libretto is a work imbued with political disillusion...Ultimately, they are all destroyed by its dictatorship. At the end, there is nothing left but love. It is through love that the Chénier and his beloved Maddalena find freedom.

tragically, that freedom comes only from their decision to die together. This readiness to embrace death, a sort of Italian *Liebestod*, is expressed in an ecstatic closing duet, sung at dawn as the lovers mount the tumbrel that will take them to their execution.

And that stirring finale is only one of the many musical numbers that makes *Andrea Chénier* the singers' opera *par excellence*. There are magnificent set-pieces for tenor, soprano and baritone, duets of love and jealousy, rousing choral scenes and interesting individual episodes for the important secondary characters.

Two outstanding singers make their Irish debuts in Opera Ireland's 2002 production of *Andrea Chénier*. The title role will be sung by the exciting Italian

tenor Maurizio Graziani. Opposite him, as Maddalena di Coigny, will be the distinguished Russian diva Nina Rautio. Belgian baritone Marcel Vanaud, last heard here as Amonasro in *Aida*, returns as the jealousy-driven revolutionary Carlo Gérard. Galia Ibragimova will be heard as Maddalena's mother and Sophie Pondiclis as her maid Bersi. Other artists returning to Opera Ireland include Volker Vogel in two contrasting parts, the Abbé and Un Incredibile; and Deirdre Cooling Nolan as the old blind woman Madelon, who, in a moving aria, brings her grandson to join the Revolutionary army. Marc Tardue will conduct, and the opera will be designed by Carlo Tommasi and directed by Ansgar Haag.



Two important singers make their Irish debuts...The title role will be sung by the exciting Italian tenor Maurizio Graziani. Opposite him, as Maddalena di Coigny, will be the distinguished Russian diva Nina Rautio.



Above:
Scenes from *Andrea Chénier*, Ulmer Theater

Tchaikovsky's Melodic Card Trick

grandmother the Countess. This lady, the 'Queen of Spades' as she is known, is herself a veteran of the tables, and Herman believes that she holds the secret of the 'tri karti', the unbeatable cards whose musical motif dominates the score. Modest Tchaikovsky, the composer's brother and librettist, had softened the ironic content of Pushkin's story and turned it into romantic drama with the love of Herman and Lisa at its core. But the composer went further and developed the character of the heroine, whom he saw as the embodiment of Russian womanhood. In Pushkin, she marries another man after Herman's death. In Modest's original libretto she simply fades out of the action. But Tchaikovsky the composer invented for her a poignant and chilling farewell scene before she throws herself into an icy St Petersburg canal. A reading of Tchaikovsky's diaries makes it clear that he was obsessed with the woman who loves him and bring about the death of both her and her

The *Queen of Spades* – *Pikovaya dama* in the original Russian – is the most exciting and elaborate of all Tchaikovsky's lyric stage works. It is also the most conventionally 'operatic', in that it uses dramatic devices long familiar from the works of the mainstream Italian, French and German composers of the 18th- and 19th-centuries. There are arias and ensembles galore, all gloriously melodic and achingly passionate in a way that anticipates the great, and as yet unwritten, operas of Puccini and the Italian verismo composers.

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Above:

Vasily Raev - Alexander Column during the Thunderstorm 1834
Scene from a Russian Ballroom, 1905



A reading of Tchaikovsky's diaries makes it clear that he was obsessed with the whole project. 'Either I am making a dreadful, inexcusable mistake' he wrote, 'or the opera is really my chef d'oeuvre.'

'or the opera is really my *chef d'oeuvre*.' A later entry confesses: 'In some places – for example, in the fourth scene (The Countess's bedroom) which I set to music today – I suddenly experienced such a dreadful fear, such horror and wild panic, that the audience must surely share these feelings when they hear it.' They do.

The role of Herman, the pathological protagonist at the centre of *The Queen of Spades*, will be sung in Dieter Kaegi's Opera Ireland production by the Viennese tenor Peter Svensson. Russian soprano Victoria Kurbatskaya will sing Lisa; Mezzo-soprano Tatiana Kamiskaya will sing Pauline; and Veronica Dunne returns after a long absence to perform the title role of the old Countess whose secret costs her her life. There are two important baritone roles: Count Tomskey, the man who tells Herman about the three cards, and Lisa's erstwhile fiancé Prince Yeletsky. These will be sung by two more recent favourites, Johannes von Duisberg and Sam McElroy, who starred in the company's *Der fliegende Holländer* and *The Silver Tassie*. The opera will be designed by Joe Vanek, lit by Paul Keogan, and conducted by Alexander Anissimov, fresh from his triumph with the NYOI's Ring Festival in Limerick and Birmingham.



Above:
Alexei Antropov - Portrait of a Court Lady during
the time of Catherine the Great

Veronica Dunne, who returns to the boards to take on the title role in The Queen of Spades, has long been a favourite artist with Dublin audiences.

Ronnie's Return



In 1987 Veronica Dunne received an Honorary Doctorate from University College Dublin and the following year she became an Honorary life member of the Royal Dublin Society. She is also one of Opera Ireland's four Artistic Patrons.

Veronica Dunne, who returns to the boards to take on the title role in *The Queen of Spades*, has long been a favourite artist with Dublin audiences. Nowadays better known as a distinguished teacher, she first performed with DGOS – as Micaëla in *Carmen* – in 1950. Between then and her last appearances as Mozart's Donna Elvira in 1965 she sang twelve roles in nineteen different productions.

Veronica Dunne began her vocal studies with Herbert Rooney in Dublin at the age of twelve. In 1946 she went to Rome for further studies with Contessa Soldini Calcagni and Maestro Francesco Calcatelli. She made her Italian opera debut as Mimi at Teatro Nuovo in Milan and her Covent Garden debut as Sophie in *Der Rosenkavalier*.

Other roles at Covent Garden included Puccini's Mimi, Mozart's Susanna and Gluck's Euridice, which she sang alongside Kathleen Ferrier's Orfeo. In 1958 she sang the role of Blanche in Poulenc's *Carmelites*. Her other roles for DGOS were: Mimi; Gounod's Marguerite; Norina in *Don Pasquale*; Suzel in Mascagni's *L'amico Fritz*; Nedda in *Pagliacci*; Antonia in *Hoffmann*; Massenet's Manon; Strauss's Sophie; and Leila in Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*. She also appeared with Sadler's Wells (now ENO), Welsh National Opera, Scottish National Opera, and at Wexford Festival.

Veronica Dunne sang in oratorio in Ireland, the UK, Belgium and Germany, and toured with Sir John Barbirolli and the Hallé Orchestra. She was a regular radio and television broadcaster and made a number of recordings. In 1961 she turned to the training of young voices and joined the teaching staff at the Dublin College of Music (now the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama). She subsequently became Director of the Leinster Opera Studio and continues her teaching work at the RIAM. In all of these posts, she has been responsible for training many of the finest Irish voices now heard in opera houses around the world.

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Singing, acting, directing, teaching – and learning the Irish language. These are just some of the activities carried on by the genial genius we know as Volker Vogel.

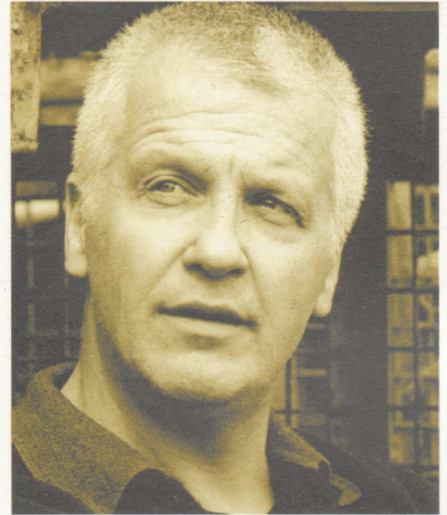
Versatile Volker

Singing, acting, directing, teaching – and learning the Irish language. These are just some of the activities carried on by the genial genius we know as Volker Vogel. The German tenor's double act as the Abbé and the spy Incredibile in *Andrea Chénier* will be his fifth appearance with Opera Ireland since he first took Dublin by storm as a riveting Herod in the 1999 *Salome*. He followed that with what The *Sunday Times* called 'a fascinating portrait of the scheming Suisky' in *Boris Godunov*; and he has since sung Tikhon, the wimpish husband in Janáček's *Katya Kabanova* and the Shabby Peasant in *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*.

Page 18 features an article on the successful Masterclasses given by Vogel at University College Limerick in August. In the same month, he triumphed as Loge and Mime in the NYOI's concert cycles of Wagner's *Ring* in Limerick and Birmingham.

Volker Vogel was born in Karlsruhe. He studied singing in Hanover but broke off in 1975 to work in Direction. In 1977 he went to Hildesheim as assistant, then director, singer and actor and has since held singing appointments in Dortmund, Freiburg and Vienna (premiere of von Einem's *Tulifant* in 1990). A member of Zurich Opera since 1991, he has also appeared in *Die Zauberflöte* at the Bastille; *Fidelio* in Munich; *Zauberflöte* and

Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* at Salzburg Festival; Melot in *Tristan und Isolde* at the re-opening of the Munich's Prince Regent Theatre in 1996; *Falstaff* and *Das Rheingold* in Hamburg and Spain. His versatile repertoire of character roles also includes the Witch in Humperdink's *Hänsel und Gretel*. He has sung in opera in Italy, the UK and the USA; and in concert under Solti at La Scala. He has also sung in concert with Dohnanyi at Cleveland, London and Salzburg; and in Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* in Oslo. Earlier this year he directed Kálmán's operetta *Die Czardasfürstin* in Ulm.



Incredibile in Andrea Chénier will be his fifth appearance with Opera Ireland since he first took Dublin by storm as a riveting Herod in the 1999 Salome.

Above:
Volker Vogel

The title role in Andrea Chénier will be sung by the Italian tenor Maurizio Graziani.

Andrea Chénier



Maurizio Graziani

The title role in *Andrea Chénier* will be sung by the Italian tenor Maurizio Graziani. Born in Macerata, he made his operatic debut in *L'amico Fritz* in Novara and Alessandria. His early international appearances brought him to Tokyo as the Duke in *Rigoletto*; to New York for *I due Foscari*; and to Sao Paulo for *Il Guarany*. He has also guested in productions of *Butterfly*, *Macbeth*, *Pagliacci*, *Trovatore*, *Cavalleria*, *Carmen*, *Traviata*, *Nabucco*, *Manon Lescaut* and other operas in Austria, Germany, England, Argentina, Greece and Brazil. He has also appeared in Bologna, Rome, Helsinki, Buenos Aires, Verona, Florida and Oslo. Other roles in his repertoire include Radamès, Gustavo, Calaf, Gabriele Adorno, Cavaradossi and Polione.



Nina Rautio

The Russian soprano Nina Rautio, who sings the role of Maddalena, first performed in the West in 1991 with the Bolshoi company at the Metropolitan Opera and the Edinburgh Festival. A year later she sang and recorded the title role in *Manon Lescaut* at La Scala Milan. In 1992 she made debuts in Rome, Savonlinna, Israel and Seville before returning to La Scala as Elisabetta in *Don Carlo*. Since then she has sung at the Paris Bastille, in Munich, London, Amsterdam and Vienna among other places. She has also appeared at the festivals in Orange and Salzburg. Her repertoire includes major Russian and Italian spinto roles as well as soprano solos in many oratorios. In addition to her Sony *Manon Lescaut*, she has recorded a video of *The Maid of Orleans* for Teldec, *Songs of Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov* for BMG, and a CD of the *Puccini Experience* for Conifer.



Marcel Vanaud

Belgian baritone Marcel Vanaud, who was Amonasro in Opera Ireland's *Aida*, returns to sing Gérard in *Andrea Chénier*. After seven years with Opéra de Wallonie, his international career began at La Monnaie in Brussels in the three Mozart/DaPonte operas. He then appeared at opera houses all over mainland Europe as well as in North and South America. His repertoire includes the main French *bariton-Martin* roles, the important Verdi and other Italian baritone parts, and Wagner's *Holländer*. He has also sung in the premiere of Manzoni's *Dr Faustus* at La Scala (his debut in 1998), and in Hindemith's *Cardillac*, von Einem's *Dantons Tod* and Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*.

Johannes von Duisberg, who made a big impact as the Flying Dutchman last year, returns to sing Count Tomsy in The Queen of Spades.

The Queen of Spades



Sam McElroy

Cork baritone Sam McElroy, who starred as Harry Heegan in Opera Ireland's *The Silver Tassie*, returns to sing Yeletsky in *The Queen of Spades*. His other Opera Ireland roles were a Cappadocian in *Salome*, Sharpless in *Butterfly* and the title role in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. His repertoire also includes Dandini in *La Cenerentola*; Blazes in *The Lighthouse*, Nick Shadow in *The Rake's Progress*; Malatesta in *Don Pasquale* and Lescaut in *Manon*, which he sang in Monte-Carlo. He has also sung Don Giovanni in Nice and Mauritius. Recent engagements include Danilo in *Die lustige Witwe* on a USA tour, Primo Barcolo in Delius's *A Village Romeo & Juliet* in Sardinia and Ford in *Falstaff* at the Montepulciano Festival.



Peter Svensson

Peter Svensson, who sings the dramatic tenor role of Herman in *The Queen of Spades*, was born in Vienna, where he sang as a boy soprano soloist with the Vienna Boys' Choir at the age of nine. After early comprimario work at the State Opera he graduated to leading tenor roles in major mainland European opera centres as well as the festivals at Edinburgh and Wexford. His repertoire includes Don Jose, Laca, Lohengrin, Florestan, Tannhäuser, Narraboth, Andrea Chénier, Erik, Oedipus and Bacchus. After a successful debut as Siegfried in both *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* in Augsburg, he sang the same roles again in 2000 and 2001 in Stuttgart, Trieste, Rome and Bonn.



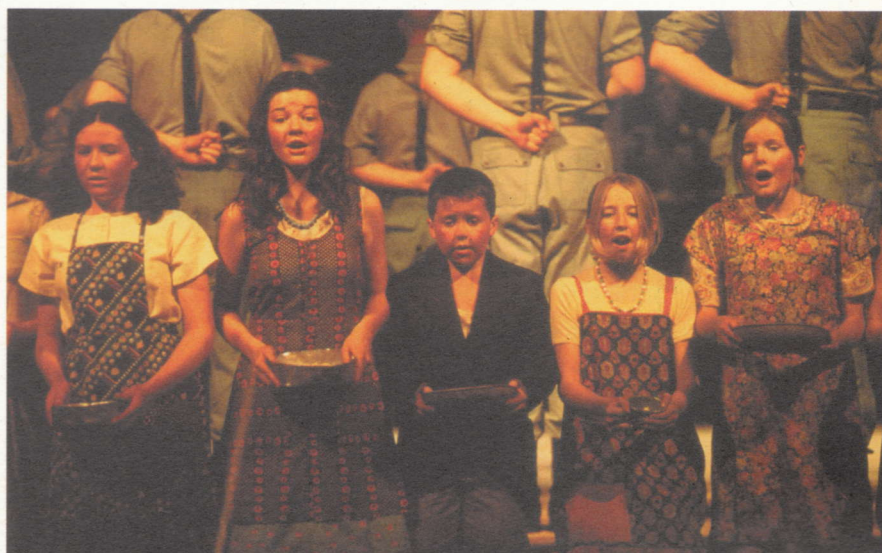
Johannes von Duisberg

Johannes von Duisberg, who made a big impact as the Flying Dutchman last year, returns to sing Count Tomsy in *The Queen of Spades*. The Dresden-born bass-baritone began his career at the Brandenburg Opera in 1987 and in 1991 was engaged by Schwerin Opera where his roles were Pizarro in *Fidelio* and the title role in *Holländer*. He appeared in *Der Vampyr* at Wexford in 1992 and has also sung at Teatro Sao Carlo in Lisbon and in Moscow, Nancy, Geneva, Strasbourg, Bregenz, Prague and Santiago in Chile. His roles include Don Giovanni, Escamillo, Jochanaan Paolo Albani, Porgy and Kaspar. Last year he appeared in Schoeck's *Penthesilea* Albrecht at the Maggio Musicale in Florence and sang Amonasro in Tokyo.

Piccolo Lasso was established by the Dublin Choral Foundation in 1996. The choir caters for young boys and girls aged from nine to sixteen years.

Starting Young

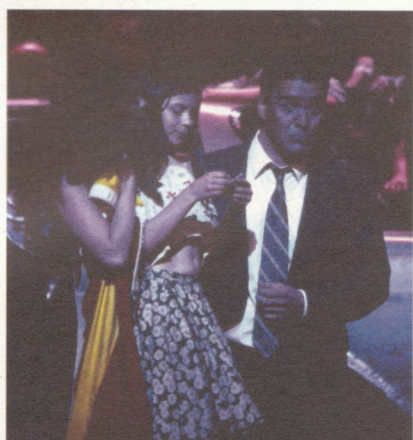
During the past number of years, the children taking part in Opera Ireland productions have invariably come from Piccolo Lasso, the junior section of Ite O'Donovan's Lassus Scholars.



It was W C Fields, I believe, who advised his fellow thespians to avoid having to act with children and animals. Well, whatever about the animals, when an opera score needs children's voices, there is no way of fudging the issue – children there must be. And right out there on the stage, too, alongside the adult singers. During the past number of years, the children taking part in Opera Ireland productions have invariably come from Piccolo Lasso, the junior section of Ite O'Donovan's Lassus Scholars. Youngsters from the choir have performed recently in *Cavalleria rusticana* & *Pagliacci*, *Aida*, *Boris Godunov* and last season's *Carmen*.

Piccolo Lasso was established by the Dublin Choral Foundation in 1996. The choir caters for young boys and girls aged from nine to sixteen years. In their twice-weekly classes they receive specialised training in sight-singing, notation and theory, vocal technique, interpretation and repertoire. The young singers are individually guided through the Dublin Choral Foundation Training Scheme, a facility that often leads to bronze, silver and gold awards.

Piccolo Lasso have performed with the Lassus Scholars in many large scale choral works including Saint-Saens' *Oratorio de Noël*, Puccini's *Missa di Gloria*, Honegger's *Une Cantate de Noël* and Mass settings by Mozart, Haydn and Schubert at the National Concert Hall and other Dublin venues. The choir has also performed much of the specialist children's repertoire including Faure's *Messe Basse*, Britten's *Missa Brevis* and Britten's *Ceremony of Carols*. Piccolo Lasso also perform contemporary Irish compositions like Eric Sweeney's *Missa Brevis* and anthems by Sweeney and Colin Mawby. They have broadcast on RTE television on numerous occasions. In September 2000 the choir performed in the ESB Dublin Jazz Week and delighted many Dubliners with their outdoor performance for Dublin Car-Free Day in 2000 and 2001. Piccolo Lasso represented Ireland at the Pueri Cantores International Congress in Barcelona in 1998 and in Lyon in 2002 where they performed music by Eric Sweeney and Colin Mawby at the International Gala Concert in St John's Cathedral.



Above:
Emily Byrne performing in Opera Ireland's *Carmen*

Piccolo Lasso with Opera Ireland chorus performing in Opera Ireland's production of *Carmen*

Booking Form - Winter 2002 Return by: 9 October, 2002

DAY/DATE	OPERA	PART OF THEATRE (SEAT AREA)	NO. OF SEATS	PRICE PER SEAT	TOTAL	ALTERNATIVE DATE	ALTERNATIVE SEAT AREA
WINTER 2002							
16 NOV (SAT)	ANDREA CHÉNIER	Limited Dress Circle available					
17 NOV (SUN)	QUEEN OF SPADES	Dress Circle not available					
18 NOV (MON)	ANDREA CHÉNIER						
19 NOV (TUES)	QUEEN OF SPADES						
20 NOV (WED)	ANDREA CHÉNIER	Limited Dress Circle available					
21 NOV (THURS)	QUEEN OF SPADES						
22 NOV (FRI)	ANDREA CHÉNIER						
23 NOV (SAT)	QUEEN OF SPADES						
24 NOV (SUN)	ANDREA CHÉNIER						
SUB TOTAL							
MEMBERS SUB							
* YOUNG SINGERS M/C FUND							
DISCOUNT							
P + P							
€ 0.65							
TOTAL							

Your generous response to this fund raises a considerable sum of money each season. This fund goes towards supporting the costs for young singers who take part in our Annual Opera Masterclass series. The masterclass provides students with the opportunity to focus on their vocal technique with an acclaimed International tutor thus furthering their singing career. Please continue to add to a contribution, no matter how small, to the end of your booking form.

CREDIT CARD DETAILS: Please debit my: Visa / Access / Amex Card No.

Expiry date:

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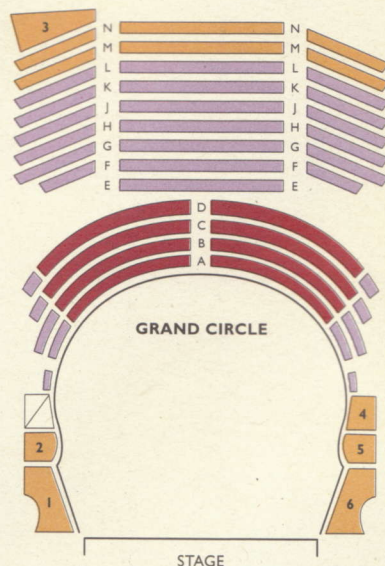
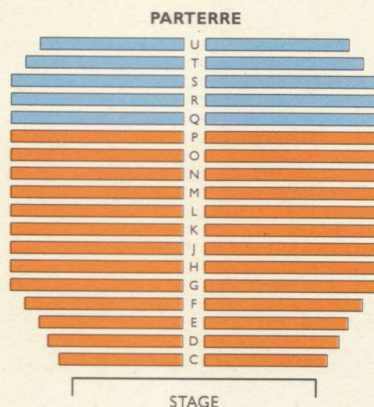
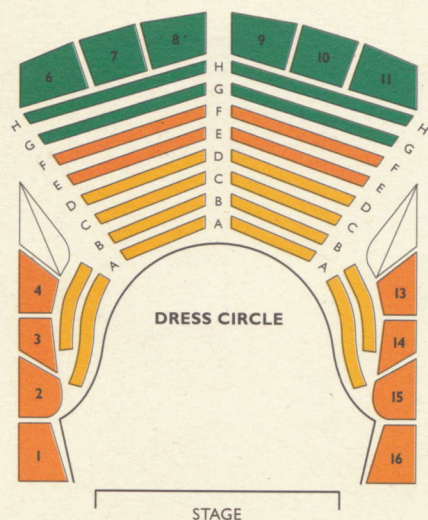
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Billing address - if different from mailing address (overleaf):



GUIDE TO SEAT PRICES	Mon - Thurs	Fri - Sun
Dress Circle A-D	€66	€71
Dress Circle E-F, Side Boxes, Parterre C-P	€52	€60
Grand Circle A-D (centre)	€50	€56
Dress Circle G-H, Back Boxes	€39	€46
Grand Circle A-D (side), Upper circle E-L	€29	€34
Parterre Q-U	€29	€34
Upper Circle M-N, Grand Circle Boxes	€14	€16

Student Discount

Upper Circle M-N & Grand Circle Box seats are available to students on any night at the special price of €7. To avail of this offer students must have a valid identity card.

Wheelchair Users Discounts

A discount of 50% will apply to wheelchair users and companion subject to availability - early booking is advisable. Please note this facility can only be booked through the Gaiety Theatre.

Special Booking Offers

For groups of 10 or more, a 10% reduction is offered on tickets purchased.

Attractive to:

- Corporate Groups (hospitality available on request)
- Office partners
- School Groups/Students
- Special Interest Groups

Contact the booking office at: (01) 453 5519

Booking Information

Tel: (01) 453 5519

Fax: (01) 453 5521

email: info@operaireland.com

Book on-line: www.operaireland.com

Opera Ireland

John Player House,

276/288 Sth. Circular Road, Dublin 8

Box Office Hours

(Mon-Fri) 10.00am - 5.00pm

Curtain Up

Please note that all opera performances begin at 7.30pm

Latecomers cannot be admitted until the first interval

Important dates:

9th October 2002

Members' Priority Booking for Winter 2002 closes



CLOSING DATE: 9th OCTOBER 2002 though you may still book by telephone (subject to availability) after this date

A new form and reminder will be sent in December 2002 - you may use it to make a priority booking for our SPRING 2003 Season, featuring Don Giovanni by Mozart and Jenůfa by Janáček.

Address which tickets are to be sent:

Name

Address

Phone (day):

Which category membership you hold, please tick below:

- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Patron
- ☐ Partner
- ☐ Corporate Sponsor
- ☐ Foundation Sponsor
- ☐ Performance Sponsor

Mozart in the Bar

Cavorting around the stalls and bar of the Gaiety Theatre is an unlikely preparation for a career in opera. But that's precisely what Dieter Kaegi had his young charges doing in his cut-down productions of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Così fan tutte* last April.

Accompanied on the piano by Mairéad Hurley, the singers in *Don Giovanni* played out the drama up and down the aisles, in the pit and the boxes, and between the seats.

The Gaiety's downstairs bar doubled as both auditorium and setting for Kaegi's deft in-the-round staging of *Così*, in which Don Alfonso and Despina become bar attendants and the two pairs of lovers its regular customers.

All of the performers were dramatically convincing in their roles. Students taking part in the productions were Sinéad Campbell, Eamon Mulhall, Conor Shanley, David Jochadze, Kim Sheehan, Daire Halpin, Celine Byrne and Niamh O'Hanlon.

Both productions were mounted as part of Opera Ireland's outreach policy of training young singers for the realities of life on the operatic stage and were run in association with the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama.



*The Gaiety's downstairs bar doubled as both auditorium and setting for Kaegi's deft in-the-round staging of *Così*, in which Don Alfonso and Despina become bar attendants and the two pairs of lovers its regular customers.*

Above:
Scenes from *Così fan tutte*

Spine-tingling triumph for a visionary project

They said it couldn't be done. They were wrong. It has been done, and it has been done magnificently...two complete concert cycles of Richard Wagner's massive Der Ring des Nibelungen. And those who were there will never forget it.

NYOI's *The Ring of the Nibelung* in association with Opera Ireland

They said it couldn't be done. They were wrong. It has been done, and it has been done magnificently. In August of this year, Alexander Anissimov and the National Youth Orchestra of Ireland, in association with Opera Ireland, University Concert Hall Limerick and Symphony Hall Birmingham, performed two complete concert cycles of Richard Wagner's massive *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. And those who were there will never forget it.

Shorn of its normal visual problems, and using only the minimum of movement, Dieter Kaegi's simple and telling staging of the mighty saga won approval from packed houses in Limerick and slightly smaller, but no less appreciative, audiences in Birmingham. Wagner's *Ring* represents one of the most ambitious achievements in the history of Western art. And the success of the NYOI's brave, audacious undertaking is reflected in the newspaper coverage of the cycles in both venues

In his review of the final *Götterdämmerung* in Limerick, Michael Dervan of *The Irish Times* wrote: 'The audience responded, as throughout the week, with a Wagnerian fire of its own, which suggests that this visionary project, the most unlikely of undertakings for a youth orchestra, has probably whetted an Irish appetite for more of the same.'

The London *Independent* covered the early performances in Limerick and had this to say about the NYOI: 'Rush to hear them: for this is one of the most uplifting musical events of the year. The young Irish are a model of musical maturity. They're in command from the first welling susurrations in unfathomable double basses. It's as good as hearing the *Ring* afresh, for the very first time. Go to hear them all. Go to be amazed.'

The London *Times*, reviewing the Birmingham *Die Walküre*, said: 'There was plenty to give thanks for: The string tone, the woodwinds shining in the depths, the firm solo cello accompanying Siegmund's reviving drink'.



Right:

National Youth Orchestra of Ireland

The Times was particularly impressed by Hélène Bernardy's Sieglinde: '...without meaning to she stole the show...'

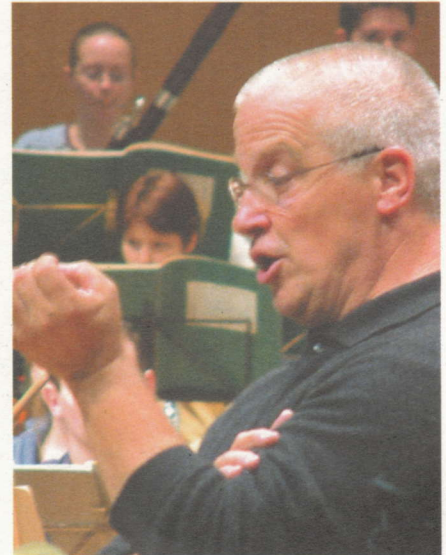
And the *Birmingham Post* spoke of 'the professionalism, the assiduous preparation and the expertise of these young musicians. Chief burden in this score rests upon the strings, ever-present conjurors of textural landscapes and warm, cushioning backcloths to spectacular wind solos, and how well they acquitted their responsibilities. On Tuesday a rapt house drank in *Die Walküre*, five hours of the most extraordinary and compelling music-making one could ever hope to witness. ... this was a heartwarming, spine-tingling performance. The strings during Wotan's Farewell, surely the pivotal point of the entire cycle, sang their hearts out, and played with a warmth, conviction and freshness which belied the many hours which had exercised them before.'

And the voices? There were singers from many countries, including ten from Ireland. Many of them were cast by Dieter Kaegi, and all of them rose splendidly to the demands of their diverse roles. Norwegian bass-baritone Frode Olsen was a commanding and smooth-voiced Wotan whose cultured singing sometimes belied the deviousness of the god's character. Janice Baird's Brünnhilde was praised by the London *Independent* as 'a real heldliches Kind, shears through like Nilssen (in low register too)'. And the *Birmingham Post* said she was 'not only formidable but enchantingly, sexily feminine.' Canadian tenor Alan Woodrow was a tower of strength as Siegfried in the last two operas. He paced himself shrewdly throughout the gruelling trial of *Siegfried* (the opera) and was fresher in the final duet than any tenor this writer has ever heard. And in the *Götterdämmerung* 'calls' he delivered a high C to die for. Anne Marie Gibbons, the young Irish mezzo recently graduated from the RNCM in Manchester, was a fresh-voiced and very feminine Guttrune.

The Times was particularly impressed by H  l  ne Bernardy's Sieglinde: 'without meaning to she stole the show. Even with eyes closed you would have seen Bernardy. Her flexible, pure soprano projected each of Sieglinde's feelings in a faultless stream of notes. At first she spooned out honeyed sounds as the lonely, loveless wife; then, as passions gripped, the throat opened, and the heavens followed.' *The Times* also praised the 'razor force of Volker Vogel, magnificent as Loge – more than ever seeming the one character in this drama who actually thinks before he utters.' Vogel, who is a great favourite with Opera Ireland fans and will be heard in the forthcoming *Andrea Ch  nier* and *The Queen of Spades*, was equally good as Mime in *Siegfried*.

The main lower voices were also impressive. Bryan Bannityne-Scott was a menacing Fafner and Daniel Lewis Williams was black velvet-toned and menacing as both Hunding and Hagen. Tomasz Konieczny's ringing baritone enhanced his roles as Fasolt and Gunther, and Rolf Haunstein's Alberich, delivered with well-focused tones what *The Times* called: 'a vocal force to be reckoned with'.

The *Independent* said: 'The NYOI delivered a stunning cast. Serbian-born Leandra Overmann is a cavernous Erda. The Valkyries, fired up by Colette McGahon's bracing Waltraute and Cara O'Sullivan's explosive Helmwig, take the hall by storm. The *Birmingham Post* spoke of: 'many delights in the large cast of professional singers from all over Europe: Suzanne Murphy's feisty, confrontational Fricka, Andreas Jaeggi a cringing Mime (in *Rheingold*), and Leandra Overmann a compelling Erda.'



Above:
Volker Vogel as Loge

Ianice Baird as Brünnhilde

Master Classes



'Volker Vogel is not only an inspiring teacher, he's an inspiring person. His singing has been clearly influenced by his positive philosophy on life, and I have come away not only a better singer, but also a more enriched person for knowing him.'

'Volker Vogel is not only an inspiring teacher, he's an inspiring person. His singing has been clearly influenced by his positive philosophy on life, and I have come away not only a better singer, but also a more enriched person for knowing him.'

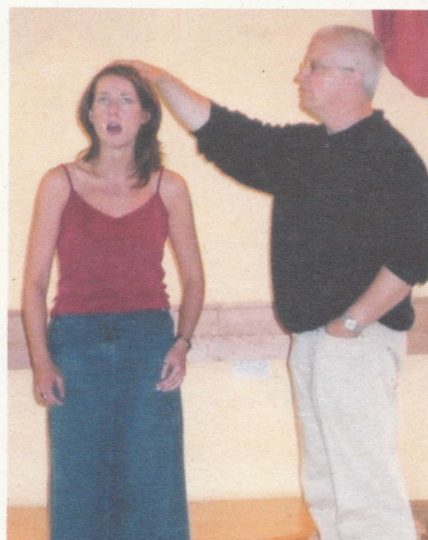
The words are those of Susan Garret, an Australian who attended the Masterclasses. And those words echo the endorsements of the other students, all of whom came away praising their tutor and thanking him for enabling them to feel an increased confidence in their approach to their singing careers

They were particularly satisfied with the way the Masterclasses' objective of developing singers' ability to be convincing in their roles was achieved. Vogel taught them how to blend the musical and dramatic aspects of their opera roles on stage by focusing on the 'acting voice'. When students learn to sing, he explained, they listen only to their voices. He encouraged them to put emotion into each song, to feel their roles and to communicate that feeling to the audience.

Getting to the roots of why they wanted to become singers in the first place, and finding out what value each of them placed on being a singer, he asked the

students to relate their singing to their everyday lives, and to be aware that it is a part of themselves rather than a separate activity.

Part of the course involved observing how the singers rehearsing for the NYOI's concert cycle of Wagner's *Ring*, which followed the Masterclasses at Limerick University, communicated their characters to the audiences without the aid of sets or costumes. And Volker Vogel himself led the way by his outstanding vocal acting in the roles of Loge in *Das Rheingold* and Mime in *Siegfried*.



Above:
Students at the Masterclasses with Vogel

Thanks to the generous support of the golfing teams who entered and the many sponsors, too numerous to mention, the event succeeded in raising funds for Opera Ireland.

Golf Classic Upcoming Events



Hardy golfers ignore weather and elections

General Election Day or not, ninety hardy golfers turned out in atrocious weather for the Opera Ireland Golf Classic on Friday, 17th May.

Despite the conditions, most of the 20 entered teams arrived at Luttrellstown Golf Club on time for the shotgun start. Thankfully the rain held off for most of the afternoon and it was only in the last 40 minutes that everyone got saturated.

By the time prizes were presented by Opera Ireland Chairman, Derek Keogh, the large gathering had been wined, dined and musically entertained in great style and everyone had forgotten about bad weather and bad shots.

Thanks to the generous support of the teams who entered and the many sponsors, too numerous to mention, the event succeeded in raising funds for Opera Ireland. The winners of the Golf Classic were Pricewaterhouse Coopers (pictured above).

The 2003 Golf Classic will be held again in Luttrellstown on Friday 16 May 2003. All golfers are welcome to participate. Please contact Mary Patricia Gallagher, Gallagher and Associates at 01 2980298 for details.

Opera Insights

Would you like to spend a couple of stimulating lunch hours at the Gaiety Theatre in November? If so, make a note of two dates in your diary. **Thursday 14 and Friday 15 November**, both days at 1 pm. That's when the production teams of *Andrea Chénier* and *The Queen of Spades* will be making themselves available to explain and answer questions about their respective approaches to the operas they are working on.

Dieter Kaegi will chair both sessions. On Thursday 14 he will introduce the *Andrea Chénier* team: Conductor Mark Tardue, Director Ansgar Haag and Designer Carlo Tommasi. On the following day he will talk about his own production of *The Queen of Spades*, and introduce his collaborators: Conductor Alexander Anissimov, Designer Joe Vanek and Lighting Designer Paul Keogan.

You will also have an opportunity to preview the sets, props and costumes for each production. We look forward to seeing you there.

Learning about opera

John Allen, who has just returned from giving the pre-performance talks at the NYOI's Ring Festival in Limerick and Birmingham, returns for the first of this season's Opera Ireland lecture series on Monday 16 September.

The lectures, which are given in association with *The Irish Times*, take place at 8 pm on Mondays in the Bank of Ireland Arts Centre, College Green, Dublin 1. Admission to all lectures is free.

See dates of lectures in 'dates for your calendar', which can be found on the back page.

Opera Ireland on Lyric FM

Our winter performances *The Queen of Spades* and *Andrea Chénier*, along with many other great performances, will be transmitted on Lyric FM (96-99FM). The programme for these can be found in our 'Dates for your Calendar', which can be found on the back page.

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The views expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board and/or Management of Opera Ireland

Produced by Lisa Irvine
Edited by John Allen
Design: www.sexton.ie

Dates for your Calendar



Opera Ireland Events

Schedule of Lectures and Performances

Lyric FM

(Subject to change. Information as known at beginning of February)

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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08	09	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

- 16** OPERA VOICES OF OUR TIME
John Allen presents recordings of the top opera singers today

- 07** DAS RHEINGOLD NYOI
14 DIE WALKÜRE NYOI
21 SIEGFRIED NYOI
28 GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG NYOI

October

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- 21** TALES OF THE BLACK FOREST
John Allen explores the romantic world of 19th century German opera

- 05** IL TRAVATORE - ANNA LIVIA
12 SAMSON ET DALILA - LA SCALA
19 MANON LESCAUT
(Auber) Wexford Live
26 IL GIURAMENTO
(Mercadante) Wexford Live

November

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- 04** THE QUEEN OF SPADES & ANDREA CHÉNIER
John Allen previews Opera Ireland's Winter Season
14 ANDREA CHÉNIER Opera Insights
(Gaiety Theatre - 1.00pm)
15 THE QUEEN OF SPADES Opera Insights
(Gaiety Theatre - 1.00pm)
16, 18, 20, 22, 24 ANDREA CHÉNIER
(Gaiety Theatre - 7.30pm)
17, 19, 21, 23 THE QUEEN OF SPADES
(Gaiety Theatre - 7.30pm)

- 02** MIRANDOLINA
(Martinu) Wexford Live
23 THE QUEEN OF SPADES
Opera Ireland's production live from the Gaiety Theatre
30 ANDREA CHÉNIER
recording of Opera Ireland's production at the Gaiety Theatre

December

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- 02** OPERA FOR CHRISTMAS
John Allen surveys the years best opera CDs

- 07** FIDELIO
from the New York Met
14 IL TRAVATORE
from the New York Met

check out **WHAT'S NEW** on our website:
www.operaireland.com

January

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- 06** MAC & MAGGIE
John Allen recalls the operatic careers of John McCormack and Margaret Sheridan

check out **WHAT'S NEW** on our website:
www.operaireland.com

February

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- 03** OPERA OFF THE PAGE
John Allen talks about popular operas based on literary sources

check out **WHAT'S NEW** on our website:
www.operaireland.com

March

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30	31					

- 03** PUCCINI & CO.
John Allen explores the golden sunset of Italian opera
24 JENUFA & DON GIOVANNI
John Allen previews Opera Ireland's Spring Season